

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BOLINGBROKE AND VOLTAIRE.
BOLINGBROKE: A Historical Study, and VOLTAIRE IN ENGLAND. By JOHN CHURTON COLLINS. 12mo. pp. xii, 261. Harper & brothers.

The essays here reprinted from *The Quarterly Review* and *The Cornhill Magazine* are of a much more permanently important character than most contributions to the general periodical press. They are historical monographs embodying the result of a good deal of independent research, partly among unpublished materials, and throwing light upon interesting periods in the lives of their illustrious subjects which have been very imperfectly studied by all the biographers. The first life without undue pretension have been styled a life of Bolingbroke; for although it is brief it covers all the necessary ground, narrates the whole of that extraordinary man's exciting public career, explains in detail the political contests in which he played a part, draws a lively portrait of his character, and surveys his literary and philosophical writings and his influence upon the thought of his time. Little is wanting to set before us a living image of one of the ablest, most brilliant, most profligate, most accomplished, and most treacherous of all English statesmen who have ever shone in parliamentary contexts or excelled in cabinet intrigues. One of the most notoriously unprincipled of men, he was at the same time one of the most fascinating. He fascinates even in the posthumous record of his disgraceful life. A wit, a scholar, a philosopher, renowned for the perfection of his manners and the charm of his address, the friend of Pope, Gay, Swift, Atterbury, Prior, Voltaire, a lover of polite letters and of all refined society, his country house was the meeting place of all that was best worth knowing in the higher circles of literature, and in the famous company assembled there the host himself was the most cultivated and agreeable. Yet while he was winning hearts by his personal grace, he was earning immortal dishonor by his political rascallities. The type is not uncommon; but of all known combinations of the scamp and the gentleman Bolingbroke is the most illustrious.

He was master of an exquisite English style, and he would be one of the greatest prose writers in the language if the value of his matter bore a just proportion to the beauty of his expression. But his political writings were designed for a temporary and often ignoble purpose, and, like his correspondence, were habitually insincere; while his philosophical essays, once held in esteem, are now admitted to be superficial and unsound. His attacks upon Christianity are far below the requirements of the modern free-thinker. If religion at the present day had no more formidable enemy to confront than Lord Bolingbroke, the churchmen might feel secure. Mr. Collins passes judgment upon Bolingbroke's works without subjecting them to a critical analysis, giving us his conclusions, but not the process by which he arrives at them. We do not know that there is any ground for complaining of this negligence, although in the case of an author so widely celebrated, and, we suspect, so little read, a more thorough examination of his productions would be interesting. His personal influence upon other authors is well known to have been powerful, and he impressed his age far more by the principles which he instilled into his literary friends than by all that he published under his own name. As every one is aware, he was the source of the desistical philosophy of Pope; it is hardly too much to attribute to him the whole scheme and line of thought of the "Essay on Man," and he was the inspiration of the "Moral Essays" and the "Initations of Horace." It is not generally known, however, how much he did to frame the opinions of a writer very different from Pope, we mean Voltaire; and to this topic Mr. Collins devotes some fresh and valuable pages. Voltaire was intimate with Bolingbroke during the Englishman's exile in France, and afterward during his own exile in England; and to the end of his life he made no secret of his obligations to a philosopher whom he regarded as his master. As their connection has never been carefully treated by the biographers, either French or English, the estimate of it presented by Mr. Collins is worth serious attention.

Voltaire's residence in England certainly had a profound and permanent influence upon his opinions, perhaps we may say upon the whole current of European thought. It is remarkable therefore that that period of three years should have been so generally treated as a hopelessly obscure chapter in his life. Mr. Collins, following partly the recent biography by Desnoyerresterre and partly certain lines of investigation of his own, has succeeded in setting forth a pretty clear and complete account of "Voltaire in England." It is the story of his personal life—not always very creditable—rather than of the origin and growth of his opinions. Told with vivacity, and with ample knowledge of the society in which Voltaire moved, it is a highly entertaining as well as valuable addition to the popular knowledge of Voltaire's career.

It is a pity that the praise demanded by the substance of Mr. Collins' book cannot also be extended to its style. That is an imitation of Macaulay so flagrant that one cannot take it quite seriously even when it is most successful. Mr. Collins gives us all the mannerisms of his original as well as that he can of his merits. The rhetorical pomp, the swift falling emphasis, the measured pauses, the balance of epigram and antithesis, the ingenious variety of illustration, the frequent substitution of allusion for direct statement, the trick of defining a person instead of naming him—all these characteristics are noticeable in his pages.

Sometimes the imitation is wonderfully clever; now and then it is a little droll. But good or bad, the essential fault remains that it is an imitation. For a quarterly reviewer, the style of Macaulay is exceedingly effective—in the hands of its owner. But nobody looks well parading in what we know to be borrowed finery.

LITERARY NOTES.

A paper which promises to excite great and wide interest will shortly appear in *The New Princeton Review*. It is that in which Mr. Edmund C. Stedman controverts the recent assertions of Mr. W. D. Howells in respect to *Gothic*.

A new firm has been established in Boston in the shape of the C. E. Jewett Publishing Company. Mr. Jewett was a former associate of Mr. J. R. Osgood. Mr. Dana Estes and Mr. C. E. Lurati are also among the incorporators. Subscription books and editions de luxe will chiefly occupy the energies of this firm. Its first publication will be Duruy's "History of Rome."

That a real poet is very seldom a successful writer of *de societate* is the opinion of a writer for *The Spectator*. A new and complete edition of the works of the late Mr. Ann S. Stephens is coming from the press of T. B. Peterson Brothers.

"Gloria Vtrola" is the title of a novel translated from the German by Oscar Schubin and in process of publication by W. S. Gotthaber.

Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet on "The Irish Question" will be brought out here immediately by Charles Scribner's Sons.

The man who wrote "Come, see the Dolphin's anchor forged" was 75 years old when he died—the 9th of this month. Sir Samuel Ferguson was one of the few harpooneers who have maintained amid legal roar a bright imagination and a delight in poetry for its own sake.

"A Marusana Blad" is the title of the novel of James' life now in the press of Ticknor & Co.

"Transformed"—a story by Florence Montgomery, the author of the pretty little tale "Misunderstood"—will be brought out in this country by the J. B. Lippincott Company. The author announces a volume of studies on "The Durability of Insanity" by Philip Earle, late superintendent of the Massachusetts State Lunatic asylum.

Six editions of Mr. Halliwell Phillips' "Outline of the Life of Shakespeare" have already appeared in England.

Colonel H. Yule has issued a circular calling the attention of English historical students to the publication at Venice of the MS. diaries of Marino Sanuto, which throw much light upon history at the important period of the beginning of the sixteenth century. Marino Sanuto, who filled high offices in Venice, and was thus able to obtain authentic information, began his diary in 1496, and continued day by day, down to 1533, jotting down "with much pains, rightly vigil, and continued research," everything worthy of note that occurred not only in Venice and her provinces but throughout Italy and the world.

Synowell's *Phoenix* (Vol. IV) in the Library of Anglo-Saxon Poetry is announced for publication in the autumn by Ginn & Co. Professor W. S. Currie is the editor.

A correspondent asks for "a little advice about how to go to work to publish a novel which in print would be about the size of George Eliot's novels." The MS. may be enclosed to any reputable firm in the habit

of publishing novels; and it will undoubtedly be judged upon its merits.

The late Mary Clegg Hay's last novel "A Wicked Girl," (Harper Bros.) shows in its vagueness the marks of declining strength. It was hardly worth publishing.

Mr. Joaquin Miller has just appeared as the head of a department in the "California Magazine," *The Golden Era*. He says therein: "These two things shall try in an unobtrusive way to do: The love of the beautiful world about us and the love of man. For all things are beautiful and all men are good. The fault is so often in ourselves if we do not see the beauty and the good that it is best to accept both and believe both; best for all." Mr. Miller concludes his meditation with this bit of verse:

A world is the better world to-day;
And a greater good mother this earth of ours;
But to-morrows are a white starway
To lead us up to the star-light flowers—

The spiral to-morrows that one by one
We climb and we climb in the face of the sun.

Are the world is a better world to-day?

For many a man's heart with wrong—

Will turn it down the wind with a song—

Will stir the wryth with his stony scorn;

The bravest hero that ever was born!

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